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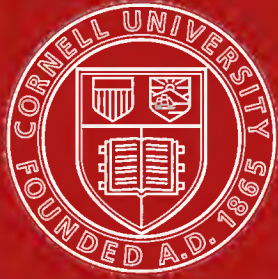
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Was Thomas Lodge an actor? An exposition



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WAS THOMAS LODGE AN ACTOR?

AN

EXPOSITION

TOUCHING

THE SOCIAL STATUS OF THE PLAYWRIGHT

IN THE TIME OF

Queen Elizabeth.

BY

C. M. INGLEBY, LL. D.

“Where thou first shuldest have learnt law, thou art become lawlesse.”

Lodge's *Alarum against Usurers.*



LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR, BY RICHARD BARRETT AND SONS,

13, MARK LANE.

1868.

WAS THOMAS LODGE AN ACTOR?

AN EXPOSITION

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THE SOCIAL STATUS OF THE PLAYWRIGHT

In the time of Queen Elizabeth.

I.—THE OCCASION.

THIS question naturally arose out of the study of Shakespeare's *Sonnets*. The publication of Mr. Gerald Massey's volume, entitled "Shakespeare's Sonnets, never before interpreted," etc. (1866) induced me for the second time to make those Sonnets the subject of a serious study, (1) as poetical performances; (2) as affording glimpses of Shakespeare's inner and outer life; (3) as evidences of his authorship of the plays attributed to him. On the questions which occupied my attention in the 2nd branch of this study, I obtained much valuable assistance from Mr. Massey's work. His hypothesis, indeed, (that many of the Sonnets were written by Shakespeare as the mouthpiece of Lord Southampton, Elizabeth Vernon, and William Herbert), I cannot but regard as in the last degree improbable, wholly incredible, and not borne out by the premises. Moreover this work is repulsive to the general reader, and for all readers is what at Cambridge used to be called "a windy book." Yet it is brimful of matter for which the student of Shakespeare may well be thankful; and, on more than one *collateral issue*, the evidence adduced is decisive, the verdict passed is conclusive. By far the most important of Mr. Massey's determinations is that which identifies Christopher Marlowe as the rival poet alluded to in Sonnets 78-86. But in this Mr. Massey has been anticipated

by the ingenious author of "The Sonnets of Shakespeare rearranged, and divided into four parts," (1859), p. 8.

What with me served to relieve the *tedium* of threading this labyrinthine jungle, was the constant need to be on the defensive. The verbal critic is not seldom outraged by Mr. Massey's choice of readings; the historical student is confounded by his assumptions; while the logician wonders at the cool assurance with which the *argumentum in circulo* is made to prove Southampton's familiar friendship for Shakespeare, and his own matchless beauty. (Pp. 99, 100; and 138, 139.) One and all, however, who succeed in reading this book with selection and digestion, find themselves obliged to combat and reject a great number of rash assumptions and ill-drawn conclusions.

Now, among the positions which demand articulate refutation is one that has a bearing on all the dramatic literature of that day, viz., that Shakespeare's profession brought him no ill repute:—

"Nor do we see how his name could be branded, or 'receive a brand,' from his connexion with the theatre, or from his acts in consequence of his being a player. What name? He had no name apart from the theatre, and the friendships it had brought him. John Davies might and did regret that Fortune had not dealt better by Shakspeare than in making him a player and playwright: but even he held that the stage only stained 'pure and gentle blood,' of which our Poet was not, although 'generous in mind and mood,' and one that 'sowed honestly for others to reap.' [*Scourge of Folly.*]" "We have no proof whatever that he felt degraded by treading the stage, and we have proof that he did not forget or overlook his old theatre friends."

So writes Mr. Massey ("Shakespeare's Sonnets never before interpreted," pp. 262, 263), with much more which I see no necessity for quoting. What he says is a strange mixture of truth and error; for Shakespeare had a status as a poet, apart from his plays, and, like Lodge, he was demonstrably "of gentle blood." Besides, the known fact is that the profession of an actor was, at that period, in such ill repute, that not only did his "name receive a brand," but even the playwright was involved in the actor's disgrace for stooping to provide him with the means of his vocation. The late Mr. Robert Bell, like Mr.

Massey, was ignorant of all this ; for, in his edition of the *Poems* (p. 205, note), he writes, “Malone does not explain why Shakspeare should say that his connexion with the theatre, from which he derived all his honours, had fixed a brand on his name.” Nor does Malone *explain* a hundred other matters which he doubtless thought were already *plain* enough : where he felt no difficulty himself, he was either too modest, or too dull, to anticipate it for others.

But the need of explanation is now made manifest, when four Sonnets, viz., 110–113, which are instinct with the personality and descriptive of the profession of Shakespeare, are by Mr. Massey summarily put into the mouth of Lord Southampton. Towards the 72nd Sonnet Mr. Massey is more forbearing : he leaves that to its author, and surely that ought to have opened his eyes to the fact that Shakespeare was shamed by merely writing for the stage : he exclaims,—

“My name be buried where my body is,
 And live no more to shame nor me nor you !
 For I am shamed by *that which I bring forth*,
 And so should you to love *things nothing worth.*”

The main subject I reserve for more extensive treatment in some future publication. I only refer to it here to show the occasion of the present “Exposition.” It was in the course of looking up materials for a complete examination of the subject, that I found my case unexpectedly strengthened by the instance of Thomas Lodge, a writer in whom I have a local interest, since he was born at West Ham, and resided at Low Leyton. Since 1841, when Mr. Collier published his “Memoirs of Alleyn,” it has been usually assumed, as standing on proof, that the obloquy to which Lodge was for some time exposed was mainly due to the fact of his having been an actor, and therefore by statute “a vagrant.” Chancing upon the poet’s own confession that he was shamed by having written for the stage, and knowing upon documentary evidence that he was for a length of time absconding from his creditors, it became certain that there was here sufficient cause for his ill repute, without having recourse to the expedient of imagining that he had been, like Shakspeare,

an actor as well as a dramatist. Accordingly I address myself to this subordinate detail, and I undertake to destroy the only authority on which it has ever been supposed that Lodge had trodden the stage.

II.—THOMAS LODGE THE PLAYWRIGHT.

As a dramatist his claims to our recognition are feeble. They rest on two very poor plays. Though we may assume that he wrote other pieces for the stage, there are but two in the authorship of which he is known to have had any share: these are, "A Looking Glasse for London and England," which Lodge and Robert Green wrote in partnership; and "The Wounds of Civill War," of which Lodge appears to have been the sole author. Both these were published in 1594, but they must have been acted years before that date: indeed, Henslowe records representations of "the lookinglasse" on the 8th March and 19th April, 1591, and the 7th June, 1592. Mr. J. P. Reardon, on the strength of some lines in Lodge's "Scillae's Metamorphosis," refers their composition to a period before 1589, the date of the first edition of that work. In the last stanza before L'envoy speaking of Glaucus, Lodge, in his own person, says:—

" At last he left me where at first he found me,
 Willing me let the world and ladies knowe
 Of Scilla's pride; and then by oath he bound me
 To write no more of that whence shame doth grow,
 Or tie my pen to Pennie-knaves delight,
 But live with fame, and so for fame to wright."

That he here directly alludes to stage-plays is proved by the penultimate line, where "Pennie-knaves" means those fellows who were admitted to the worst part of the theatre at a penny a-head. Mr. Reardon, who quotes the above lines in the third volume of "The Shakespeare Society's Papers," 1847, p. 145, remarks, "Lodge early abandoned the profession, both as an author *and as an actor.*" Mr. Charles Knight, I observe, in his dissertation on "The Dramatists of Shakspeare's First Period," published in his National Edition of Shakspeare, says of Lodge, that "he had been [*sic*] a graduate of Oxford; *next a player,*

though probably for a short time." Mr. David Laing, in his *Introduction* to the edition of the "Defence of Plays," and the "Alarum against Usurers," reprinted for the Shakespeare Society, 1853, repeats the statement that Lodge had been "a player," at pp. xxiii. and liii. But, as if to render the alleged documentary proof indifferent to the main issue, Mr. Laing asserts that in the language of the day a playwright was a "player." He adduces no evidence in support of this assertion, which I take leave to doubt. This *Introduction* is carefully compiled and well written, and is, on the whole, the best account of Lodge's life and writings which has ever been published: the more unfortunate is it that he should have substituted his praise of Mr. Collier's fidelity for a verification of Mr. Collier's statements.* Mr. Reardon, Mr. Knight, and Mr. Laing, in all likelihood used the same authority for their statements that Lodge had been a player.

III.—THOMAS LODGE THE VAGRANT.

In the eighth volume of Dodsley's "Select Collection of Old Plays," 1825, edited by Mr. J. P. Collier, an incorrect quotation is made from Gosson's "Plays Confuted in Five Actions," in which Lodge is called "a vagrant person visited by the heavy hand of God;" and it is thence inferred by the editor that Lodge had been an actor. He again repeats the alleged quotation in his *Introduction* to the reprint of Gosson's "School of Abuse" which he superintended for the Shakespeare Society in 1841.

In the same year his "Memoirs of Edward Alleyn" was printed for the Shakespeare Society. The fifth chapter of this work is mainly concerned with Thomas Lodge. At the first page we find him described as "the celebrated Thomas Lodge, who had been an actor and dramatic poet;" and at page 40 we read as follows:—

"We first hear of Lodge some thirteen years earlier, viz. about 1580, as

* Mr. Laing's elaborate catalogue of Lodge's works does not contain the "Prosopopeia." In 1847, Mr. Collier does not hesitate to assign this work to Lodge (Shakespeare Society's Papers, vol. ii., p. 156); and it appears that he superintended Mr. Laing's labours in 1853. Mr. Bohn, in his edition of "Lowndes," mentions this work *sub voce* "Lodge," but does not mention Lodge *sub voce* "Prosopopeia."

the antagonist of Stephen Gosson, who published his attack upon the stage, under the title of 'The School of Abuse,' in 1579. Lodge immediately wrote and printed a Defence of Plays and Play-makers; but he was not allowed to publish it, because, as he stated in one of his subsequent productions ('Alarum against Usurers,' 1584), 'the godly and reverend, that had to deal in the cause, misliking it, forbad the publishing.' Gosson, however, obtained an imperfect copy of Lodge's tract, and answered it in his 'Plays Confuted in five Actions.' He there accuses Lodge of being 'a vagrant person, visited by the heavy hand of God;' an expression hitherto not clearly understood, inasmuch as it was not known that Lodge had ever been a player, and by statute 'a vagrant.' We have now, for the first time, evidence to prove that, like many of the dramatists of that day, he had been an actor as well as an author: therefore it was that Gosson called him 'a vagrant person, visited by the heavy hand of God;' but how long he continued on the stage, or what class of parts he filled, we know not.

Again, at p. 42, we are told that

"The best account of Lodge, and of his numerous works in prose and verse, is to be found in vol. viii. of the last edition of 'Dodsley's Old Plays;' but the compiler of that piece of biography knew nothing of the transaction to which the papers about to be inserted relate. It appears that Lodge was indebted to a tailor of the name of Richard Topping, carrying on business in the Strand, and that Henslowe (in order not to lose Lodge's services by his imprisonment in the Clink), had become security for the money. Lodge, however, as is asserted, went beyond seas (not on the voyage to Terceras and the Canaries, already mentioned), leaving Henslowe liable for the debt and costs, which Topping could not obtain, Henslowe pleading his privilege from arrest, as one of the grooms of the queen's chamber."

It is no part of my design, in this tract, to trace the course of this very ordinary incident in Lodge's early life; so I shall say no more about it till we come to Henslowe's Memorial to George Lord Hunsdon, which will speak for itself. Dramatic Biography is no more interested, than universal history, in a tailor's proceedings for the recovery of a debt; and it is only when an interesting fact in the life of a famous man is said to be revealed by some document having relation to the tailor's "suit," that we care to record it. Before, however, recurring to Topping and his little bill, I must call attention to the inaccuracy of Mr. Collier's citation from Gosson's "Playes Confuted in Five Actions." Gosson does not call Lodge "a vagrant person visited by the heavy hand of God." What he does say of Lodge is, that he was by repute "*hunted* by the heavy hand of God, and become

little better than a vagrant, looser than liberty, lighter than vanitie itself”—where “liberty” is the old word for *licentiousness of living*. The discrepancy is more significant than appears at first sight; for, whereas Mr. Collier’s misquotation *might* afford some colour to the notion that Lodge was an actor, and therefore a statutable vagrant, the actual words of Gosson obviously and unequivocally point to the probable fact, that even then (1582) Lodge was living “by his wits,” at times in a sponging house, at other times a fugitive from his creditors, anyhow hunted from society, and a wanderer (vagrant) in the land.

But, not only is there no allusion whatever to Lodge as an actor, in any of Gosson’s works, but what is said of him is *pro tanto* an evidence that he was a poet and dramatist, and not a player. I proceed to give four extracts in illustration of this position, viz., two from the “Apologie of the Schoole of Abuse,” and two from “Plays Confuted in Five Actions.” It will be seen that when Gosson wrote his “Apologie,” he did not certainly know who his opponent was; all he knew about him being gathered from the rumour of the City, which amounted to this—that the Players’ apologist was a poor gentleman and scholar, whose needs had made him so unscrupulous as to write plays and to defend the cause of the players. Even in Gosson’s third publication, “Plays Confuted in Five Actions,” he knew so little of his opponent as to call him “*William Lodge*.” I have been unable to discover any evidence that the copy of Lodge’s “Defence of Plays and Players,” which Gosson surreptitiously obtained, was more “imperfect” than the two copies which are extant: both these want the title-page.

“Our players since I set out the Schole of abuse, have travailed to some of mine acquaintance of both Universities, with fayre profers, and greater promises of rewardes, yf they woulde take so much paine as too write agaynst mee; at laste like to Penelopees suters, which seeing themselves disdained of her, were glad to eneroche with some of her maides, when neither of both Universities, would heare their plea, they were driven too flie to a weake hedge, and fight for themselves with a rotten stake. Beggars, you know, muste bee no chosers, hunger sauceth every meate, when fishers lay theyr hookes in haste, frogges will make a savory dish. It is tolde mee that they have got one in London to write certain *Honest*

excuses,* for so they tearme it, to their dishonest abuses which I revealed. It is good for him that will falsifie pictures, not to let them see the lively creatures, that are desirous to view his worke, neither is it convenient for him too present his excuse to any of those that have read my Schoole, and behelde those abuses in playing places, least their eyes reprove him for a lyar."—*An Apologie of the Schoole of Abuse, against Pöets, Pipers, Players, and their Excusers*, 1579. Fo. 90.

"If the Excuser be the man that is named to me, hee is as famous a Clarke as *Calvitiu Sabinus*, which was so troubled with a grosse conceite, and as short a memory, that every minute he forgote the names of *Uliesses*, *Achilles*, *Priamus*, and such as he knew as well as the Begger his dishe, beeing very familiar with them," etc.—*Apologie of the Schoole of Abuse*.

"Nevertheles I thought it necessarye to nettle one of their Orators above the rest, not of any set purpose to deface hym, because hee hath dealt very grossely, homely, and uncharitably with me, but like a good Surgeon to cut, & to seare, when the place requireth, for his own amendment. Which thinge I trust shall neither displease your honor, nor any of the godly, in the reading, so lög as the person whom I touch is (as I heare by hys owne frendes, to hys repentance if he can perceive it) hunted by the heavy hand of God, and become little better than a vagrant, looser than liberty, lighter than vanitie it selfe.—*Playes Confuted in Five Actions*. n. d. Circa 1582. (The Epistle Dedicatorie).†

"Amongest all the favorers of these uncircumcised Philistines I meane the Plaiers, whose heartes are not right, no mā til of late durst thrust out his heade to mayntaine there quarrell, but one, in witt, simple; in learning, ignorant; in attempt, rash; in name *Lodge*; whose booke, as it came not to my handes in one whole yeere after the privy printing thereof, so I confesse, that to it, before this time I answered nothing, partlie because he brought nothing, partly because my hearte was to bigge, to wrastle with him that wanteth armes. Therefore considering with my selfe that such kinde of sores might be launced to sone, I chose rather to let him ripen and breake of him selfe, that vomiting out his owne disgrace, & being worne out of favour among his own friends, I might triumph in

* If this be understood as the title of the work alluded to, it follows that Lodge was not the "rotten stake." It is an ascertained fact that Lodge was contemporary with Gosson at Oxford; yet (1) Gosson may have known nothing of him, there: and (2) he may have been misinformed concerning the status of the honest excuser "in London."

† "Imprinted for Thomas Gosson dwelling in *Pater Noster* row at the signe of the Sunne."

Henry Gosson succeeded Thomas Gosson at the Sunne, in Paternoster Row, and published Shakespeare's "*Pericles*," 4to. 1609. Probably all three were brothers.

the cause & shedde no blood. * * * * *
 but if you be such as I take you for, glad to be taught, unwilling to perish
 lovers of the Gospel, haters of libertie, champions in earth for the right of
 Christ, collēgers to the devill and all his workes, no spirit of sleepe shall
 muffle your eyes, no fat of selfe will, or ignorance shall cover your heartes,
 no parasite shall flatter you, in your sinne, no *Lodge*, no playmaker, no
 Epicure, no Atheiste, shall make you to surfette with these delightes.”—
Last two pages of “Plays Confuted in Five Actions.”

Such are the chief of Gosson’s abusive remarks on the character and writings of his opponent, whom posterity has adjudged a much bigger man than himself. We may be quite sure of this—that if Lodge had been an actor, Gosson must have heard of it; and it is quite inconceivable, having regard to the malicious and venomous character of the beast, that, having knowledge of the fact, he would have failed to make a point of it. The utter absence of any allusion to Lodge as an actor is the most satisfactory *indirect proof of the negative* that we can have. The *direct proof of the affirmative* adduced by Mr. Collier will next engage our attention, viz. :—

PHILIP HENSLOWE’S MEMORIAL.

I again extract from Mr. Collier’s “Memoir of Alleyn,” p. 45 :

“the paper next to be inserted (which is slightly defective in some places) was Henslowe’s statement of the case, in which he admits that Lodge had escaped beyond seas to avoid arrest and imprisonment. Here it is that we find that Lodge had been ‘a player.’ Lord Hunsdon thought that the merits were with Topping,* or, at all events, that Henslowe ought not to be allowed to prevent the course of law by pleading his privilege as one of the Queen’s household.”

* On the facts disclosed, that Lodge owed Topping £7 for clothes, and that Henslowe, to save his friend from arrest, had become security for Lodge in the amount due, we may surely agree with Lord Hunsdon in his view of the case, and think “that the *merits* were with Topping.” Unfortunately the *goods* furnished were with Lodge, and the *value* with Henslowe; and, even in that day, it was possible for an unscrupulous “bail” to evade the payment of a fair debt by “the law’s delay,” and “the *privilege* of office.” As we do not hear of Lodge and Henslowe falling out, the musty proverb can give us no assurance that Topping ever came by his own. Though Nym and Bardolph cannot divide the fire-shovel, the one may use it to carry coals for the other, if only they *remain* “sworn brothers.” (See Hen. V., iii. 2.)

[*Mr. Collier's reading of Henslowe's Memorial.*]

TO THE RIGHTE HONORABLE MY VERIE GOOD LORD THE LORD OF HUNSDON,
LORD CHAMBERLEN.

Wheareas, righte honorable, one Richard Toppin did of late prefer unto your honor a petition against me suggestinge therein divers untruthes, to thintent to bringe your Lpp. into some hard concept of me. The truth is, right honorable, that one Thos. Lodge beinge aboute a yeare nowe paste arrested within the Libertie of the Clinck (wheare I am a dweller) att the suite of the said Toppin, uppon an action of debte, and haveinge some knowledge and acquaintaunce of him as a player, requested me to be his baile. Before anie yssue theare tried, Lodge removed the action by Habeas Corpus to the Kinges benche, and theare (by thacceptaunce of the Judges) put in newe baile. Toppin mislikinge that baile, procured a procedendo to trie thaction in the Clinck, wheare it first begon, and theare hath proceeded onelie of purpose to laie the execution on me. Nowe, forsomuche as I am advised by my Councell that by reason of thacceptaunce of the newe baile upon the Habeas Corpus I am cleere in lawe and that the debte (if theare be anie) noe waie concerneth me, I have been unwilling frome tyme to tyme (I must needs confes) to yeeld satisfaction without lawfull compulsion, as anie man ells would in like case: by means whearof Toppin hath made sondrie severall complaintes to your late honorable father, the late Lo. Cobham, before whome, in this * * * reasonable manner, I made my excuse. But wheare Toppin affirmeth that Lodge hath lefte sufficient in my handes to paie the debt, and that I have wilfully refused to satisfie the same with pretence to put him to chardge and trouble; and that therefore the Lord Cobham did enjoyne me either to paie the debt or bring forth Lodge, my good Lo. the * * * are in all points most untrue; onelie this was doen. For that Toppin suggested that I was privie to the place of Lodge his hiding (which was alsoe untrue) the Lord Cobham enjoyned me to doe my endeavor to attache him, and to that end gave me his proper warrant, which accordingly I putt in execution, but by no meanes could attaine to him; for that he is (as I heare) passed beyond the seas; and more then this his Lpp. did not enjoyne me unto. Nevertheles, if it please your Lpp. to order the cause, albeit I never had nor am like to have any manner of restitution, I shalbe content to submitt my self to your Honor's judgement, with hope of your Honor's favorable consideration for the mittigation of the execution, which being pryvily recorded is brought to xij^{li} and all [odd?] money, the debte beeing meerly vij^{li} and noe more; soe that theare is above v^{li} awarded besides the debt. And thus I rest, in all dutie,

Your Honors most humble

PHILLIPP HENSLOWE.

[*Exact copy of Henslowe's Memorial.*]

TO THE RIGHTE HONNORABLE MY VERY GOOD LORDE
THE LORDE HUNSDON, LORDE CHAMBERLEN :

Whereas righte honorable, one Richard Toppin did of late p̄ferr unto yor honno^r a petiçon againste me, Suggestinge therin divers vntruthes to the intent to bringe yor Lpp : into some harde conceipt of me ; The truth is righte honorable, that one Lodge beinge about a yeare nowe paste arrested, wthin y^e Libertie of the Clincke (where I am a dweller,) at y^e sute of y^e said Toppin vppon an acçon of debte, and havinge of me some knowledge and acquaintaunce requested me to be his bayle. Before any issue there tried Lodge removed y^e acçon by hæes Corpus to the Kings Benche, and there (by the acceptaunce of y^e Judges) put in newe bayle, Toppin mislikinge that baile p̄cured a prosedendo to trie y^e acçon in y^e Clinck, where yt firste began. And there hath p̄ceded onlie of purpose to lay the Execution on me : Nowe for soe much as I am aduised by my Councell that by reason of the acceptaunce of y^e newe bayle vppon y^e hæes Corpus I am clere in lawe, and y^t y^e debte (if there be any) noe way conçneth me, I have byn vnwillinge from tyme to tyme (I must needes confesse) to yealde satisfacçon wthout lawfull compulçon as any man ells woulde in like case, By meanes whereof Toppin hath made sundrie form^l Complaintes to yor late honnorable father, and y^e late Lord Cobham, before whome in this like reasonable manner I made my excuse But where Toppin affirmeth that Lodge hath lefte sufficient in my handes to pay y^e debte, and y^t I have willfullie refused to satisfie y^e same, wth p̄tence to put him to chardge & trouble, and y^t therefore y^e Lo : Cobham did enioyne me either to pay y^e debte, or bringe forth Lodge : my good Lo : theis informaçons are in all pointes most untrue, onlie this was don, ffor that Toppin suggested y^t I was privie to y^e place of Lodge his beinge (w^{ch} was alsoe vntrue) The Lo : Cobham enioyed mé to doe my endeavour to attache him, and to y^t ende gave me his Lppes warrant, w^{ch} accordinglie I put in Execution, but by noe meanes coule attaine to him, for that he is (as I heare) passed beyounde y^e seas, and more then this his Lpp : did not enioyne me vnto : Neverthelesse if yt please yor Lpp : to order y^e cause albeit I never had nor am like to have any manner of restituçon I shalbe content to submitt my selfe to yor honno^rs Judgement, wth hope of yor ho : favorable consideraçon for y^e mitti-gaçon of y^e Execution, w^{ch} beinge privylie recovered is broughte to xijⁿ and odd money, The debte beinge merely vij^{li} and noe more, Soe that ther[e] is about v^{li} awarded beside the debte. And thus I reste in all dutye :

Yor honno^rs moste humble

PHILLIPP HENSLOWE.

To obviate the possibility of mistake in the lection of this curious document, Mr. E. W. Ashbee has, at my request, and by permission of the Governors of Dulwich College (where the paper is preserved), furnished me with an exact fac-simile of it, worked off on somewhat similar paper. By means of this fac-simile my readers may readily assure themselves that in no part of the memorial is Lodge called a "player;" indeed he is not called "Thos. Lodge," and it is only an inference, an unavoidable conclusion, that the Lodge here spoken of is Thomas Lodge, the dramatist. Mr. Collier, however, professes to find that he is there called "Thos. Lodge," and that it contains this remarkable grammatical inversion;

"and haveinge some knowledge and acquaintaunce of him as a player, requested me to be his baile,"

which is evidently intended to mean, *as I had some knowledge and acquaintance of Lodge as a player, he requested me to be his baile.* But in this place the original paper reads thus, "and havinge of me some knowledge and acquaintaunce requested me to be his bayle,"

meaning, of course, *Lodge, having some knowledge and acquaintance of me, requested me to be his bail.*

The interpolation of the five words needed to corroborate Mr. Collier's explanation of the misquoted passage from Gosson, and the omission of two other words inconsistent with that interpolation, may be thought to exhibit some little ingenuity; it was, however, a feat which could have cost him no great pains. But the labour of recasting the orthography of the memorial must have been considerable; while it is difficult to imagine a rational motive to account for such labour being incurred. To expand the abbreviations and modernize the orthography might have been expedient, as it would have been easy. But, in the name of reason, what is the gain of writing *where* and *there* for "where" and "there;" *cleere*, *yeeld*, and *meerly* for "clere," "yealde," and "merely;" *verie*, *anie*, *laie*, *waie*, *paie*, *yssue*, and *pryvily*, for "very," "any," "lay," "way," "pay," "issue" and "privylie;" *sondrie*, *begon*, and *doen* for "sundrie," "began" and "don;" and *thintent*, *thaction*, and *thacceptaunce* for "the intent," "the action," and "the acceptaunce"?

By Mr. Collier's account this paper "is slightly defective in some places." This is verbally true. The paper shows six small wormholes; the first three of these are in the eighth line of the original; the remaining three in the fifteenth line. None of them is of the slightest consequence to the reader; but all are shown in the fac-simile, being distinguished by spots of red ink. But the defects indicated by Mr. Collier's asterisks do not exist. There is not even a wormhole in any of those places.

IV.—THE DISREPUTE OF THE DRAMA.

Little remains to be said. Stephen Gosson tells us that he himself was the author of three plays, of which only the names remain; viz. *Catiline's Conspiracies*," "the *Comedie of Captain Mario*," and "Praise at Parting." His view of the case was that he had served the Devil by writing plays, and now he would serve God by denouncing them. How then was he any better than Lodge, who, having written two or three plays, repented him of his error, and resolved "to write no more of that whence shame doth grow." To this subject he returns in the "*Prosopopeia, containing the Teares of the holy, blessed, and sanctified Marie, the Mother of God*," (8vo. 1596), if the initials T. L. belong to him, as seems not unlikely. In the preliminary epistle he writes, "Some will condemn me, and that justly, for a Galba (who begat foule children by night, and made fayre pictures by daie;) to whom I answere, that I paint things in the light of my meditation, who begot the foule fore-passed progenie of my thoughts in the night of mine error." If, as Mr. Collier supposes, he referred to his novels and poems, as well as his plays, he gave them hard measure indeed, for they are pure and blameless; while the pastoral romance, called "*Rosalynd*," from which Shakspeare took the story of "*As You Like It*," is a delightful composition, of which its author could not have been ashamed.*

* This piece was, by mistake, set up in large type for Mr. Halliwell's folio *Shakespeare*; and, in consequence, a few copies were taken off, some of which have found their way into the market. It appears in Mr. Collier's "*Shakespeare's Library*," 1843, as well as Mr. Halliwell's folio. The verses

Robert Green, Lodge's partner in "The Looking Glass for London and England" (one of the most prolific writers and profligate livers of that day), in a remarkable tract called "The Repentance of Robert Greene, Maister of Artes, wherein by himselfe, is laid open his loose life, with the manner of his death," (1592), reports how he takes shame to himselfe for his "varieties of penning Plaies and other trifling Pamphlets of Love." Green, like Lodge, had never stooped to the boards. If we will have still more evidence of the disrepute of the Elizabethan drama, we may find it in the treatment to which Lodge was subjected for his "Defence of Plays." That tract is temperate, pious, and thoughtful, yet the authorities inhibited its publication; while Gosson's "Plays Confuted in Five Actions," which is replete with foul and scurrilous abuse, met with no opposition.

How it came to pass that the Drama acquired this disrepute is a question which it is impossible to treat satisfactorily in a short compass. Doubtless the source from which the Drama sprang, and the infamous character of its leading writers,—Marlowe, Peele, Nash, and Robert Greene, had much to do with the fact. That it outlived that disgrace was mostly due to Shakespeare and Jonson. *εἴρηται λόγος,*

C. M. INGLEBY.

VALENTINES, ILFORD, ESSEX,

October 29, 1867.

in "Rosalynd" were reprinted by Mr. Singer in his "Select Poets." He also reprints "Scillae's Metamorphosis," 1589; but his promise (*Preface* to the volume of "Poems of Thomas Lodge," 1819), to reprint "A Fig for Momus," 1595; and "Phillis," 1593, was not redeemed. The former had been reprinted in 4to. at the Auchinleck Press, in 1817. These, with the two mentioned in the text (p. 7); are all the complete reprints of Lodge's works with which I am acquainted. "The Complete Works of Thomas Lodge" (two volumes) is, I am glad to say, one of the projected reprints of "The Roxburghe Library."

